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THE NEW AGE

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TRIPURI—A REVIEW

Tripuri reflected all the weaknesses and defects of the national movement at the present stage. The Congress was faced with an unprecedented crisis. It met at a time when both the national and international situation demanded bold decisions. But it was the organisational crisis which over shadowed all and dominated the entire session.

The Background

Since after the withdrawal of the Civil Disobedience Movement, Congress organisation, its influence and popularity have grown at a tremendous pace. The National Congress has increasingly come to represent the consciousness of the Indian people, and has embodied their urge for freedom and independence. This immense growth of the mass influence of the Congress has not been fully reflected in the leadership of the Congress. While the masses are increasingly on the move and mass struggles are bursting out on all sides, the leadership continues to follow a policy of drift and compromise. As expressed by Gandhiji at the time of Office Acceptance, the policy dominating the Congress has been one of using the Ministries to avoid revolution on the one hand and a mass civil disobedience on an unheard of scale, on the other. The working of Ministries has, if anything, intensified the tendency of drift.

The failure of the Congress leadership to reflect the new urge and conciousness of the masses has resulted in the increasing disillusionment of the Congress ranks in the policy of drift. Subhash Babu's re-election in the face of the opposition of the dominant leadership of the Congress was an indication of this radicalisation in the Congress ranks, of the dissatisfaction with this policy dictated from the top.

Subhash's election by the delegates was a vote for a militant policy on the part of the Congress. Gandhiji and the right wing members of the Working Committee however, took it as a vote of no-confidence in themselves and the latter resigned from the Working Committee precipitating a crisis in the national organisation. Subhash's victory in the election did not imply lack of confidence in the old leadership of the Congress. It was a mandate to the same leadership for the new policy of preparation and struggle. This mandate the old leadership refused to accept and came forward with the theory of "homogeneous Cabinet" as if the mandate of the delegates was not for the Congress as a whole but for Subhash Babu alone.

Issues Confused

Events moved fast after Subhash Babu's election. The resignation of the old guards of the Working Committee threw the entire country into confusion. The political considerations which had decided the voting in favour of Subhash had been thrown into the background.

The solution of the organisational crisis which had been precipitated by the Right had come to occupy the foremost place. Tripuri met at this juncture with the heart of every Congressman throbbing with anxiety. The fate of the Congress and the entire national movement was in the balance. Will Tripuri mean a split? Will it be able to overcome the crisis? These were the questions dominating the minds of all on the eve of Tripuri Congress.

The right wing leaders had propounded the theory of a homogeneous cabinet. This meant Complete withdrawal of the co-operation of the right and ultimately forcing Bose to resign his presidentship. Homogeniety plea only meant that the Right wing was propounding the view of incompatibility of the two wings of the Congress. Mahatma Gandhi had written in this strain just after the Delhi A. I. C. C. walk-out and it seemed as if the theory was going to be put in practice and the Democles' Sword which had been hanging over the Congress was going to fall and have its victim.

While the Right was thus taking its stand on the basis of a disruptive policy, there was a section of the left which was equally going to the other extreme and threatened disruption from the Left.

The Swing to the Left—Its Limitations and Short Comings

During the course of the last three or four years, the Left has gained increasing strength. Dissatisfied with the policy of drift followed by the leadership, more and more ranks have turned towards the Left which was showing the way out of the difficulties. The Leftward swing has been rapid and swift. But the parties of the Left were not so swift in absorbing the new elements which were groping their way towards them. The Communists and Socialists were not able to give these new Left elements the education and training which would make them conscious lefts, and enable them to play their proper role in the national struggle. Organisationally, the place of most of them was within the C.S.P., but the C.S. P. was not expanding; it has been marking time for a long period. These new left elements fell an easy prey to certain adventurist leaders in the Congress who, due to their old factional past were not so much concerned with the Congress accepting the new policy of struggle, as with getting control of the Congress organisation. Congress Working Committee to them was a pawn in the game and it had somehow to be brought under control. These elements also supported the homogeneous cabinet proposal, only from the other side. They wanted a Working Committee entirely of the Left and of themselves in which the old leadership was to find no place. The most consistent exponent of this theory was Roy who in the course of a manifesto distributed at Tripuri said "Irrespective of the attitude of the older leaders, re-constitution of the Supreme Executive of the Congress must take place as a logical consequence of the result of the presidential election." For, according to him, "otherwise the Congress will not be given an alternative leadership and the historic necessity of a consciously revolutionary leadership will not be fulfilled."

Between these die-hards from the Right and the Left Congress seemed to be facing disunity and disruption. Their tug-of-war had already diverted the whole issue before Tripuri away from the political plane. The problem of the change of policy, of the adoption of a policy of struggle and

conscious direction had already been relegated to the rear.

The Possibilities

Tripuri Congress presented immense possibilities. The majority of the Congress delegates had voted in favour of a new policy when British Imperialism was faced with a grave crisis in international arena. Its policy of appeasement, instead of succeeding in its end has whetted the appetite of the fascist powers. When the stocks of British Imperialism stood so low, it was exactly the time when the national forces were maturing in their revolutionary strength. Workers, peasants, students, all section of the population have been rising to a new awakening and consciousness. The people in the States were rising from their slumbers of centuries and were on their march. This was the opportunity to launch an offensive on the part of the Congress against the proposed Federal Scheme, against Imperialist domination itself and achieve the independence of the country. As a corollary to this new policy of the Congress, there was the need for a united leadership which would properly reflect the desires and aspirations of the Congress. The united leadership in which both the Left and the Right could co-operate and enable the Congress to make the advance that national and international situation demanded. With the election of Bose the possibilities of such an advance opened before the Congress and a historic step forward, by which the Congress was to make a breach with the past policy of drift and prepare for launching an offensive, and have a leadership which would unify and head the entire forces of the Congress and the nation to participate in this struggle, was on the order of the day.

The Communists and Socialists realised the possibilities of the situation and consciously worked in the direction of making this advance. They formulated the tasks facing Tripuri. *Congress should emerge as a Congress of unity and struggle, struggle through unity for strnggle'.* They moved for getting the Congress to accept a programme of struggle which would be the best guarantee of revolutionary unity.

Unity and Struggle

A draft of the National Demand resolution agreed between the Socialists and Communists was prepared which after reviewing the increasing strength of the forces of struggle declared that, "taking into accunt the situation in the country and outside, the Congress feels that the time has come to lead all this rising tide, into a nation-wide attack at the very existence of imperialist domination and secure for the people of India a Constitution of their own making. *To this clarion call for an immediate offensive was attached a concrete programme of action for the Congress "to put the organisation on a fighting basis", to eliminate factors making communal dissensions and disruption, to build a much stronger front against imperialism by drawing closer the organisations of the workers and peasants, to develop the fighting capacity of the people, by the Ministries utilising the opportunity of offices more fully, to coordinate and develop the struggles of the peoples of the various states as an integral part of the national movement, the creation of a national volunteer corps, so that by the time the Congress met again a fit situation may be created for the enforcement of the national demand for Independence.*

The resolution if passed would have been a charter of struggle and would have given the lead to the nation for the final struggle for independence.

The Communists and Socialists not only agreed among themselves, but also approached the Left nationalists with the agreed draft and got their consent for the same. The entire Left stood united for pressing this programme of struggle upon the Congress and putting the Congress on different rails. The first condition of success in getting this programme accepted was the unity of the Left itself which had been fulfilled. It was now possible to *press it upon* other sections of the Congress, so as to make it the programme of the Congress as a whole. Jawahar was approached and he agreed in substance with the draft. Jawahar's agreement was of great importance, for with him in favour there was a fair chance of the resolution being passed by the Congress itself. But while the programme was accepted by the entire Left, its implications were not grasped. Programme of struggle necessitates united Congress and only unity in the entire national ranks could enable this programme to be carried through. While there was a section of the right which neither liked this programme nor wanted a really united Congress, there was a section of the left as well which accepted this fighting programme but would not accept its necessary implication of fighting for maintaining the unity of the Congress, and of working for a united Working Committee which would have the co-operation of both wings of the Congress. They were thinking in terms of a Left Working Committee and working for the same. **It was necessary for the United Left to take the initiative for proposing a united Working Committee as well, in order to supplement their proposal for the united fighting programme. Here the left failed and allowed Tripuri to be turned into a Congress which shirked real issues of the movement and carried on fight on non-political personal plane.**

The Communists and Socialists put their entire weight in favour of a united Working Committee. They attempted to win the support of the right as well as the lefts in favour of this. But they met with concerted opposition from both the quarters. With Bose as the president, the left was in a position to seize the initiative and put forward the proposal of a united Working Committee. Such a proposal on Bose's part would have rallied the Congress except the disruptive elements of extreme Right. It would have enabled us to act as the unifiers of the Congress. Those who would have opposed the proposals would have exposed themselves as disruptors. Under the united pressure of the left, centre and the reasonable elements of the Right, Congress unity would have been forged on the basis of united Working Committee and a sound basis for a militant fighting programme of the Congress would have been prepared.

The President's failure

This was not to be. The proposal of the Communists and Socialists for making a move in this direction was not liked by the Rashtrapati probably under pressure from the nationalist Left elements who wanted an exclusive Left Working Committee or at least a Working Committee with a clear majority for the Left. The failure of Bose to take the initiative

left the field free to the right and they were not slow to take advantage of the situation.

Right Seizes the Initiative

With signatures of more than 100 A.I. C. C. members they sponsored a resolution in the A. I. C. C. wherein they proposed the unity of the Congress but a unity which was on terms most advantageous to the Right.

Pant's resolution embodied the Right-wing's method of bringing about unity in the Congress. It attempted to restore the domination of the Right wing in the supreme organ of the Congress. It was not a move for a united Working Committee in which the Right and Left would co-operate; it was for installing a Right Working Committee with which the Left must co-operate unconditionally. The resolution even administered a rebuke to the President who as the representative of the Left had got elected to the Presidential chair. Thus the resolution restored unity in the Congress by demanding complete surrender of the Left.

The failure of the left to take the initiative in favour of unity, enabled the Right to capitalise all the sentiments for unity in favour of this resolution. The mover made a fervent appeal for unity in the Congress ranks and asked all those who wanted unity to support the resolution. The left was put on the defensive. Instead of coming out as unifiers, they had to plead and argue that they also stood for unity but on terms fair to both the wings. The Left was put to the necessity of moving amendments to get those portions deleted, which militated against real unity, and which in effect were meant to squeeze the Left.

While the entire Left could not be united in favour of a positive lead for a united Working Committee, it was possible, after some differences, to unite all the left elements except the small group round Roy in favour of the amendments to Pant's resolution.

The position taken by the Left was clear. Unity in the Congress ranks was absolutely indispensable, for only a united Congress could lead the country against imperialism. At the present, when we give a call to the nation for a nation-wide struggle against imperialist domination, it is not the time to emphasise our ideological differences with Gandhiji and his followers. We have differences with Gandhiji, we will never give up our right to speak about them, but right now Gandhiji's co-operation and guidance is essential, we therefore; accept that under Gandhij's leadership a united Working Committee must be given the task to prepare the country for launching the offensive against Imperialism.

There were voices in the Left which were against the acceptence of Gandhiji's leadership. They would emphasise the necessity of over-throwing the same. It appeared opportunistic to them to consent to Gandhian leadership. Little do they realise, however, that they are taking an abstract point of view. The task at Tripuri was not to popularise our critique of Gandhism, with a view to ultimately—sometimes in future—bring the Congress under our leadership. The task was now and here to commit the whole Congress to that forward step which would enable us to launch a struggle against imperialism. Those who would care for the immediate advance and who would see that this advance alone could be the stepping stone for

more advance in future had no hesitation in considering Gandhian leadership as inevitable for the present stage. It is only the infantile babblers who would think that their principles are so weak as to be in danger of being lost sight of, unless they protested in season and out of season, who think that their revolutionary purism would be lost if they accept Gandhian leadership even though it be for launching the struggle against imperialism, in short only those who value words more than struggle, could protest against the stand taken by the left. The Left unequivocally came forward to point out the undesirable features of the resolution. They protested against the positions which implied lack of confidence in the democratically elected President, against the attempt made in the resolution to reconstitute the domination of the Right and made an appeal for modifying the resolution so as to transform it in favour of a united Congress and a united Working Committee.

A Moral Victory

In fighting for the amendments to the resolution, the left was really fighting for genuine unity in the national ranks. The entire strength of the left was being put in favour of the policy of forging a united Congress, the fittest instrument for national struggle. The left was therefore able to mobilise many centre elements. It could win the sympathies of a large mass of delegates. Even when the right refused to modify the resolution, and pressed it to vote, the Left went to vote with the sympathisers of the centre and of many of those also who voted in favour of the resolution. The left mustered 135 against 218 of the Right, the highest votes that the left has yet got in the history of the Congress. It was clear that though defeated in votes, the moral victory was of the Left, the moral sympathies were with them and the delegates would record a higher voting strength in favour of the Left.

The Landslide

But the lessons of the entire developments seem to have been lost upon a section of the Left. They did not realise that they could win and make any advance *only to the extent that they fought for additional unity*, that the task of the left is not to work for sectional gains, but to strive their best for national advance, and to the extent that they do that, they advance their own strength and the strength of the nation. The extreme left section failing to see this obvious truth reinforced by the experience at Tripuri, easily got provoked and staged the rowdy demonstration in the open session. The Communists and Socialists had forestalled some such ugly developments and prepared their ranks to fight against any such move. But a small element who style themselves as 'left' alienated the sympathies of the centre and prepared for the landslide of the votes on the following day.

Sarat Babu's stand on the National Demand resolution still further exposed the left nationalists as opportunists The National Demand resolution certainly did not embody all that the left wanted but it marked a great step forward and enabled us to take the Congress as a whole in the direction of a fighting programme. Sarat Babu's opposition to the resolution as a whole made it impossible for the Left to stand united and further alienated the sympathies of those who stood for a militant programme, on the basis of a united Congress.

A Session of Lost Opportunities

Next day's debacle was a foregone conclusion. The moral victory of the Left in the Subjects Committee had been transformed into a moral victory of the Right by the adventurist acts of the irresponsible 'Left'. The great opportunity of making a historic advance in the development of the united Congress was thus lost. For this the extreme right element was certainly responsible to a great extent. But the adventurist left was also responsible to a greater extent, first by refusing to allow the united left to take the initiative for a united Working Committee and then by creating the scene in the open session and thus preventing all chances of utilising the pressure of the mass of delegates to force the right to modify the resolution. *Tripuri is a session of lost opportunities for the left because of the irresponsible anti-united front and ultra-sectarian attitude of a section of the left.*

This failure of a section of the left enabled the right wing to concentrate the attention of the entire Congress on Pant's resolution to the extent of pushing the real issues of struggle to the rear. Nonetheless, the Tripuri Congress has marked a real advance in its political decisions.

The original draft of Jawaharlal was partially based upon the agreed draft of the left. It declared that 'the time has come for the full application of the principle of self-determination to India, so that the people of India might establish an independent democratic state by means of a Constituent Assembly.' It, however, still lacked the operative part and did not indicate what the Congress decides to do in order to achieve this goal. The joint amendment of the Communists and Socialists attempted to remove this deficiency. But Jawaharlal himself came forward to accept the central idea of the amendment and incorporated in the resolution that 'with a view to prepare the country for a nation-wide struggle, this Congress calls upon all parts of the Congress organisations, Congress Provincial Governments and the people generally' to eliminate communal disruption, co-ordinate the work of Provincial Governments with work outside the legislatures and to strengthen the Congress organisation, 'so as to make it a still more effective organ of the People's will.'

For Nation-wide Struggle

The National Demand resolution marks a definite step forward. For the first time, it calls upon the Congress 'to prepare for a nation-wide struggle'. The Haripura resolution on Federation simply reiterated the Congress opposition to the Federation, and declared that the Congress would combat it whenever it was imposed, thus leaving the initiative to imperialism to choose its own time and opportunity to inaugurate the Federation. It implied that the Congress would not seize the initiative on its own. But the National Demand resolution makes an estimation of the national and international situation and declares that the time has come for preparing the country to lauuch a nation-wide struggle, it calls upon the Congress and the people to prepare for such struggle. The resolution thus, while not calling upon for an immediate offensive, gives us the basis for moving the entire Congress, for preparing for a mighty national struggle in the immediate future and thus take the Congress on

the road of mass movement and away from the present policy of drift.

The resolution on the States Peoples struggles also registers some advance over the Haripura resolution. The policy of non-intervention in the States has been given up. But the advance in the resolution only reflects what already constituted the practice towards the movement in the States. The initiative to organise and co-ordinate the States' struggles is still lacking in the decision over States problem. But as in the case of the National Demand resolution, the resolution does provide a basis for an increasing identification of the Congress with the struggles of the States' Peoples And the initiative and work of the Left can force the Congress to co-ordinate and unify these struggles to a greater extent and thus prepare both the British Indian and the States people for the coming nation-wide offensive.

Tripuri Congress places a great responsibility on the left. United Left can capitalise the political advance made in the Tripuri resolutions and lead the united congress on to the path of struggle and offensive against imperialism, objective which we have cherished for years and which is now almost within our grasp. For this, we need the strength of the entire left directed towards the sole purpose of popularising the National Demand resolution, of politically and organisationally preparing the country for the call given in the resolution, always bearing in mind that the National Demand can only be achieved through unity and struggle. Energetic work for both will enable us to repair the damage done at Tripuri, to recapture the opportunity lost there and to take the country nearer to its goal of independence.

We must, however, sound a note of warning against the disruptive tendencies already at work. There is a section of the right which wants to go back upon the repeated assurance that Pant's resolution did not mean a vote of censure upon the president, which is trying to worsen matters and which seems to think that the passing of the resolution is a blank card to them to launch an offensive against the left, thus giving free rein to disruption in the Congress. There is also a section of the left which would refuse to accept the verdict of Tripuri and think of going behind it by devious means. Both will have disastrous consequences. The duty of the genuine left, of every Congressman is clear to prevent disruption from either side and to seriovsly set about the task of preparing for the coming struggle which both the national and international situation is beckoning us to start.

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THE THIRD FIVE YEAR PLAN OR NATIONAL ECONOMY

By V. Molotov

[The following is the first part of the thesis on the Results of the Second Five Year Plan the main tasks of the Third Five Year Plan presented by Com. V. Molotov before the 18th Congress of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union which concluded its sessions in the last month,—*Editor*.]

As the result of the successful fulfilment of the Second Five Year Plan (1933-1937) in the U.S.S.R. the fundamental historical task of the Second Five Year Plan has been accomplished; all exploiting classes have been finally liquidated, and all the causes, which give rise to the exploitation of man by man and the division of society into exploiters and exploited have been completely annihilated. **The most difficult task of socialist revolution has been solved; the collectivisation of agriculture is completed; the collective farming system has been finally consolidated. In our country, "the first phase of communism, socialism, has been essentially realised" (Stalin). The victory of socialism has been embodied in law by the new Constitution of the U.S.S.R.**

Socialist — state and co-operative collective farming — ownership of the funds of production, the means of production, and the building work pertaining to production, amounted to 98.7 per cent. of all production funds in our country by the end of the Second Five Years. The socialist system of production rules supreme in the whole national economy of the U.S.S.R.; it comprises 99.8 per cent. of the gross production of industry, and in the gross production of agriculture, including the individual secondary farming carried on by the collective peasants, it amounts to 98.6 per cent.; and in goods turnover, 100 per cent.

Builders of Communism

The class structure of Soviet society has changed in accordance with the socialist reconstruction of the economy of the country. In 1937 the workers and employers, employed in the socialised economy of the U.S.S.R., represented 34.7 per cent. of the total population of the country; the collective peasantry together with the small handicraftsmen and tradesmen organised in co-operatives, represented 55.5 per cent.; the army, the students, pensioners, and others, 4.2. per cent. Hence even at that time 94.4 per cent. of the population of the country was employed in socialist economy or closely bound up with it. The rest of the population, individual peasant farmers, handicraftsmen and small tradesmen not organised in co-operatives, represented only 5.6., per cent. of the population. This section of the population has diminished still further since then.

Socialist Society in the U.S.S.R. is composed at the present time of two

classes on friendly terms with one another: of workers and peasants, between whom the border lines just as between these classes and the intelligentsia are becoming blurred and gradually disappearing. The overwhelming majority of the toilers in the U.S.S.R. are active and conscious builders of the classless socialist society, communism. The victory of socialism in the U.S.S.R. has achieved an inner moral and political unity of the people hither-to unprecedented anywhere, a moral and political unity of the toiling masses under the banner and under the leadership of the Communist Party and the Soviet power—a unity which is capable of not only putting an end to the last remnants of the hostile classes, with their alien influences, and of defeating all hostile attacks from outside, but which at the same time forms the best guarantee for the further growth and development of our homeland, a guarantee for the victory of communism in our country.

The Second Five Year Plan

The chief and decisive *economic* task of the Second Five Year Plan, the completion of the technical reconstruction of the national economy of the U.S.S.R. has been essentially accomplished.

The technical apparatus of production of the country has been renewed from the bottom upwards. Over 80 per cent. of the total output of the industries was supplied in 1937 by new works and factories built or entirely rebuilt during the First and Second Five Year periods; about 90 per cent. of all the tractors and harvester combines employed in our agriculture were manufactured by the Soviet industries during the Second Five Year Plan. The industries and the transport system completed the tasks set them by the Second Five Year Plan before schedule. The Second Five Year Plan was fulfilled by the industries by April 1, 1937, or in 4 years and 3 months, and during these Five Years the heavy industries grew with special rapidity! The Second Five Year Plan of the railway transport services was over-fulfilled in four years. The highly important tasks set by the Second Five Year Plan, in agriculture output of grain and cotton, were also over-fulfilled.

In comparison with 1932, the last year of the First Five Year Plan, industrial production had increased in 1937 by 120 per cent., the scheduled increase for the Second Five Year Plan being 114 per cent. The average annual rate of growth of industrial production was 17.1 per cent. in the Second Five Year Plan, as compared with the 16.5 per cent. envisaged by the Plan.

Production cadres have developed in all branches of the national economy of the U. S. S. R., and are mastering the new technique successfully. The greatest victory of the Second Five Year Plan is the formation of large cadres of the Soviet intelligentsia necessary for all branches of socialist construction, and the extensive promotion of new leading workers from the ranks of the Bolshevists and the non-party Bolshevists in every branch of national economy.

New Technical Cadres

The successes gained in the sphere of the mastery of the new technique have found effective expression in the *Stakhanov* movement. The development of socialist competition, and of its highest form—the Stakhanov movement—has led to a great upsurge in the productivity of labour, in the industries

and other branches of national economy. During the Second Five Year Plan, labour productivity in the large industries increased by 82 per cent. as compared with the 63 per cent. envisaged by the Plan. In the same period the productivity of labour in building work increased by 83 per cent. as compared with the 75 per cent. laid down in the Second Five Year Plan. The advance of the Stakhanov movement, and the many magnificent examples given of socialist-conscious work by the Stakhanov workers with their high index of labour productivity, have provided the pre-requisites for a fundamental consolidation of labour discipline in all our factories and institutions, and therewith an indispensable condition for the high productivity of labour of all toilers, and a pledge for a fresh powerful growth of Communism in the U. S. S. R.

In order to ensure the fulfilment of the Second Five Year Plan, it was necessary to organise the struggle against the last remnants of the hostile class elements, against the hostile class influence, in national economy, in cultural construction, and in all political life. For this purpose it was necessary above all to organise the struggle for the protection and the consolidation of the socialised state and collective economic property against thieves and embezzlers of state and collective farming goods, against each and every accomplice of the class enemy, and especially against the traitors to the people in the form of Trotskyist-Bukharanist and bourgeois-nationalist spies, wreckers, and sabotagers, who have conspired with foreign espionage services and have become the agents of the fascist secret police. Their traitorous work has done serious damage in a number of branches of the national economy of the U.S.S.R. The shattering of this band of spies and wreckers has cleared the path for further and even greater successes of socialised economy in our country.

Rise in Material Standard

The task set by the Second Five Year Plan for the *raising of the material and cutural level of the toilers*, and the simultaneous raising of the consumption level of the people by double and more, has also been fulfilled.

The number of workers and employees in all branches of national economy has increased by 17.6 per cent. in the Second Five Year Plan. The average yearly wages of workers and employees had increased by 113.5 per cent. or more than double, in 1937 as compared with 1932. The wage fund of the workers and employees increased by 150 per cent. instead of the 55 per cent. increased by two and a half times. The state expenditure for cultural and various other needs of the workers and employees (education, health service etc.) has increased during these years from, 4.4 milliard roubles to 14 milliard roubles, or by over three times. The prosperity of the collective peasants has increased considerably in the years of the Second Five Year plan. The total revenues of the collective peasantry have increased by over 2.7 times in four years (1933-1938) and the cash income, which is divided among the collective peasants according to work units, has increased by 4.5 times in these years.

In 1937 the output of mass articles of consumption was more than doubled as compared with 1932. In the case of a number of important products and

manufactures for mass consumption, the output was not only doubled, but trebled. The goods turnover of the state co-operatives has more than doubled in the years of the Second Five Year Plan, and in conjunction with collective farming trade it increased from a value of 47.8 milliard roubles in 1932, to 143.7 milliard roubles in 1937. The nonfulfilment of the tasks of the Second Five Year Plan with regard to the reduction of the retail prices of articles of mass consumption has been compensated by a much greater increase in wages for workers and employees than envisaged by the Plan, and by the considerable increase of the cash income of the collective farms and collective farmers.

A real **cultural revolution** has taken place in the U.S.S.R. during the Second Five Year Plan. The number of scholars in the elementary and secondary schools increased from 21.3 millions to 29.4 millions, in the proportion that the number of scholars in classes 5-7 doubled and the classes 8-10 it increased fifteen times. The number of students in the colleges increased to 550,000. Cultural construction is developing in all other branches.

Great successes are recorded by all the Republics of the U.S.S.R. in the industrialisation, and in the raising of the material and cultural level of the population, in the formation of national Bolshevist cadres, in the progress made towards advancing all culture, national in form and socialist in content. The peoples of the Soviet East are making especially rapid progress in their material and cultural development.

Tasks of the Third Five Year Plan

On the basis of the victorious accomplishment of the Second Five Year Plan, and of the successes of Socialism, the Soviet Union enters a fresh period of development with the Third Five Year Plan, the period of the *completion of the building up of the classless socialist society ond of the gradual transition from Socialism to Communism*, the period in which the communist education of the toiling masses, and the overcoming of the remnants of capitalism in the consciousness of the human being—the builder of communism—assume decisive importance.

The difficulties in the way of fulfilling this gigantic task must, however, not be under-estimated, especially in view of the existence of the hostile surrounding capitalist world. The more that in spite of the successful fulfilment of the First and Second Five Year Plans, in spite of the record speed achieved in the development of our industries, in spite of the fact that the production technique of the industries of the U.S.S.R. have surpassed the most advanced capitalist countries, nevertheless in the *economic sphere* we have not yet caught up with the most developed capitalist countries.

The U.S.S.R. has become transformed into an economically independent country, assured of all necessary technical equipment for its economy and the requirements of national defence. In the speed of development the U.S.S.R takes the leading place in the world. Whilst the industries of the capitalist countries, after the severe economic crisis at the end of 1929, could only reach a 103.5 per cent. of the 1929 level in 1937, and declined again under the blows of a new crisis, the whole of the large-scale and small industries of the U.S.S.R. reached a figure of 371 per cent. in 1937, as compared with the level of 1929, and the

large-scale industries of the U.S.S.R. 428 per cent. alone, representing a more than sevenfold increase of large-scale industrial output as compared with before the war. In 1938 the total output of the industries of the U.S.S.R. increased by further 11 per cent. as compared with the previous year, reaching 412 per cent. as compared with 1929, in the large-scale industries actually 477 per cent. In the capitalist countries industrial production declined in 1938 by 13.5 per cent. as compared with the previous year, and fell off to 91 per cent. of the level of 1929.

In contrast to the capitalist world, where development has been extremely unequal in the different countries, and where there has been no growth of the industries as a whole, but a noticeable decline of industrial production, we have had in the Soviet Union an uninterrupted and rapid advance of the industries, a rapid *rate of growth* of industrial production from year to year. But when we take into account that in the past our country was extremely backward economically, we see that even now the *level of the development* of the industries of the U.S.S.R. regarded from the standpoint of the output per head of the population, is considerably lower than in the technically and economically most developed capitalist countries of Europe and the United States. It is a well-known fact that in our country a considerably smaller amount of industrial products fall to each head of the population than in such countries as the United States of America, England, Germany, France. At the end of the Second Five Year Plan, for instance, less than half as much *electricity* was consumed per head of the population of the U.S.S.R. than in France, almost three times less than in England, three and a half times than in Germany, five and a half times less than in the United States. *Steel* almost two times less than in France, almost three times less than in England and Germany, nearly four times less than in the U.S.A. Somewhat less *coal* was consumed per head of the population in the U.S.S.R. than in France and considerably less in the U.S.A., England and Germany.

U.S.S.R. is still behindhand in the output per head of such industrial goods as fabrics, paper, soap, and some other articles.

This inadequacy of industrial production in the U.S.S.R. as compared with the capitalist countries more advanced in technical economics must be completely liquidated, in order that the final victory of Communism may be achieved in its historical contest with capitalism.

Build Invincible Socialist Economy

Now that the U.S.S.R. assumes the form of the socialist State, has completed in essentials the technical reconstruction of national economy, and is in advance of any capitalist country of Europe with respect to the level of the technique of production in industry and agriculture, now we must and can face and accomplish in actual practice the fundamental economic task of the U.S. S.R. to its full extent—*to overtake and surpass in economic respects also the most advanced capitalist countries of Europe and the United States of America,* and to accomplish this task finally in the immediate future.

This requires a further and considerable increase of the technical equipment of every branch of national economy, in-

cluding the all-round development of machine building and all heavy industry, a decided improvement of the whole organisation and technology of production, accompanied by far-reaching application of the latest achievements of science and invention, and a quantitative and, in particular, a qualitative increase of the production cadres and their mastery of technique in the industries, in the transport service, and in agriculture. Following the words of Lenin: "The productivity of labour is at bottom the most important, the most decisive, for the victory of the new state of society," we must ensure an all-round development of socialist competition and the Stakhanov movement, and unrelaxing consolidation of work, discipline in all factories, institutions and on all collective farms, and must achieve a a degree of high labour productivity of workers, peasants and intellegentsia, worth of the socialist state of society

At the same time, there must be ensured a growth of national income and a development of the goods turnover, which will increase by one and a half times, to double the consumption by the people during the years of the Third Five Year Plan. To this end, not only must the output of the heavy and defence industries be further increased, but work must be directed towards increasing the output of articles of mass consumption and food-stuffs, and the possibility of a corresponding increase in the real wages of the workers and employees, in the income of the collective peasants, must be ensured.

In accordance with these fundamental tasks of the Third Five Year Plan, a considerable raising of the cultural level of the whole mass of the toilers, in town and country, must be achieved and a great step forward must be taken in the historical task of *raising the cultural and technical level of the working class*, the most advanced and guiding force of the socialist state of society, to the *level of the engineers and technicians.*

The gigantic growth of the industries and of all national economy in the Third Five Year Plan, and the necessity of ensuring their continued uninterrupted advance, in accordance with the whole State plan, under the conditions of increasing aggressiveness of imperialism in the countries surrounding the U.S.S.R., demands the formation of great State reserves, especially of fuel, electric energy, and in some branches of the defence industry, and in the development of the traffic system by means of suitable distribution over the various regions of the country, elimination of unproductive and distant transport, and the ensuring of maximum resources on the spot in the chief economic centres of the country.

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THE ANTI-JAPANESE NATIONAL UNITED FRONT IN CHINA

By Chen Tsin

China is a semi-colonial country which the imperialist robbers have been striving to conquer and divide up for a long time. In order to reach this goal, the imperialists have maintained a permanent state of disunity and internecine war. They have obstructed the unification of the forces of the entire Chinese people. *"To vanquish China through the Chinese themselves,"* that is the principal tactics of the Japanese Imperialism in China. The first great Chinese revolution of 1925-27 suffered defeat, because the collaboration of the Kuomintang with the Communist Party (1924-27) was disrupted.

The Japanese Imperialists used every means to deepen and extend this split. Even after the unleashing of war, they are attempting to disrupt the national unification and unity of the Chinese people, with the help of Trotskyist bandits and other counter-revolutionary elements.

The Story of the Anti-Japanese National United Front

Back in 1931, after Japan had occupied Manchuria and Japanese imperialism had passed over to a military offensive against Shanghai, the Communist Party of China published an appeal, in the name of the Central Chinese Soviet Government and the Workers' and Peasants' Red Army, in which it proclaimed its readiness for a military agreement with all those bodies of troops who were willing to fight against Japanese Imperialism. This invitation met with no sympathy on the part of the Kuomintang and the Kuomintang Government. Only a part of the Kuomintang people on the part of the commanding staff of the Kuomintang army was favourably disposed. Nevertheless, this appeal was a fore-runner of the Anti-Japanese National United Front.

Japanese aggression continued. It threatened China's national existence. In the face of this menace, the Communist Party published the now-famous appeal of 1st August 1935, which stated that *"resistance to Japan means life, failure to resist means death."* The Communist Party proposed to all parties, political groups and armies, to unite in struggle against the common enemy. It proposed first of all to halt the civil war, in order to concentrate all national forces for the salvation of the fatherland from the Japanese aggressor. It proposed the formation of a united government of national defence and a unified anti-Japanese army.

In order to facilitate the formation of the national united front, the Chinese Soviet Government instituted a change in its policy. It granted the small property owner in the Soviet districts the right to vote, and changed its agrarian policies on the basis of democratic measures. In February 1936, the Central Soviet Government issued an appeal to the entire Chinese people. In this appeal it demanded the convocation of an all-

Chinese Conference for struggle against Japan, for the salvation of the fatherland.

In order to unite all anti-Japanese forces in the country, to secure the territorial integrity of China, and to satisfy the democratic demands of the broadest masses, the Communist Party came out in September 1936, for the formation of an All-Chinese Democratic Republic. Its declarations stated:

> "When an all-Chinese Democratic Republic is established the Soviet districts will be an integral part of it. The population of the Soviet Districts will elect their representatives to the all-Chinese Parliament. The same democratic order will be put into effect in the Soviet districts as will prevail throughout the entire domain of the Chinese Democratic Republic."

At the same time, the Communist Party sent a letter to the Kuomintang criticising the wrong policy of concessions to Japanese Imperialism and pointing out that this policy has led to a situation endangering the national existence of China. The Communist Party demanded that the Kuomintang "restore the spirit of the three principles of Sun Yat-Sen, the policy of alliance with the Soviet Union, collaboration of the Kuomintang with the Communist Party, and develop the labour and peasant movements." It also demanded that "the civil war be stopped immediately and the anti-Japanese united front be organised throughout the country to conduct the holy war of national liberation......"

The Kuomintang and Kuomintang Governmrnt replied: "In order to resist aggression from without, the country must first of all be subdued internally." The Kuomintang and the Kuomintang Government organised an even more intensive campaign against the Soviet districts and the Chinese Red Armies. The Communist Party was not intimidated. It called upon the Chinese people to form a unittd front against the foreign enemy. In order to show that the Red Army did not desire a continuation of the fratricidal civil war, it returned the weapons and troops captured by the Red Army to the Kuomintang troops.

In December, 1936, the Sian events occurred. Grave danger threatened China. The Japanese imperialists, through their Trotskyist agents. provoked the open resistance of the discontented government troops, sympathetic to the Red Army, against the Kuomintang government. They arranged the capture of Chiang Kai-shek and wanted to murder him. At the same time, they advised the Kuomintang government to organise punitive expedition against the troops stationed in Sian, who had refused to subordinate themselves to the Central Government. By kindling civil war in China, the Japanese wanted to facilitate the conquest of North China and then of all China. The fate of the entire Chinese people depended on the outcome of events in Sian.

The Communist Party of China understood the significance of these events. It exerted its full force and authority to settle the conflict peacefully and to prevent any rash action.

It proposed that a peace conference be called. The Central Soviet Government and the Central Committee of the Communist Party proposed that in addition to the representatives of the

Nanking government and other parties and political groups, the representatives of the armies and circles should also participate in the conference.

Although Chiang Kai-Shek had persecuted the Communists for ten long bloody years, the Communist Party immediately proposed to the organisers of the Sian insurrection that they release him. Chiang Kai-Shek was able to return home. The Trotskyist bandits, who attempted to murder him and to kindle civil war, suffered defeat.

Thanks to the extraordinary efforts of the Communist Party, the Sian events were settled peacefully. Since then the ten-year-old internecine war between the Red Army and the Kuomintang troops has come to an end. The country entered upon the path of unification and thereby serious preparation for resistance to the Japanese aggressor.

After the Sian events, the Communist Party of China gained a great deal of sympathy. It was supported by the masses of people, as well as by the patriotic parties, organisations, and troops. This created favourable conditions for the formation of the Anti-Japanese National United Front on the basis of the renewed collaboration of the Kuomintang and the Communist Party.

In February,1937, the Communist Party directed the following proposals to the Third Plenum of the Central Committee of the Kuomintang:

(1) Cessation of all civil war, concentration of all national forces for the struggle against the external aggressor-

(2) Freedom of speech, press, assembly, etc., for the people, liberation of all political prisoners.

(3) Convocation of a conference of representatives of the various parties, political groups, bodies of troops, and circles, for the unification of all forces in the country in the struggle to save the fatherland.

(4) The carrying out of all preparatory work for the armed resistance against the Japanese aggressor in the shortest possible time.

(5) Improvement of the living conditions of the masses.

Should these proposals be accepted, the Communist Party guaranteed to the Kuomintang, that it would call a halt to the armed struggle for the overthrow of the Kuomintang governmont in all China, designate the Soviet government, in the future, as the "Government of of the Special District of the Chinese Republic", subordinate the Red Army under the name of "National Revolutionary Army" directly under the Central Nanking Government and the leadership of the high command of the war, introduce a consistent democratic order with universal suffrage in the Special District, cease confiscation of the lands of the gentry, and resolutely carry out the programme of the Anti-Japanese National United Front.

Since the Third Plenum of the Central Committee, the Kuomintang has changed its policy. It adopted a firmer attitude towards the Japanese aggressor and proclaimed its readiness to co-operate with the Communist Party. Since then the relations between the Kuomintang and the Communist Party have improved daily.

In July, 1937, the Chinese people's war of national liberation against the Japanese conquerors began. In the face of the effensive of Japanese Imperialism

the Communist Party immediately fulfilled its promise. The Red Army became the Eighth Route Army, the Soviet District became the Special District of the Chinese Republic. The Anti-Japanese national united front was built on this basis.

The Strengthening and extension of the Anti-Japanese National United Front

The government and the entire people united in the struggle against the Japanese aggressor. The antagonisms within the country, between the Central Government and the local authorities, among others, are gradually disappearing. China's Central Government is beginning to transform itself into a government of national defence. The Chinese army is transforming itself into a unified army of national salvation and rebirth.

The war against Japan imposes the highest demands upon the Chinese people. Great difficulties will unavoidably appear on the road to victory ever Japanese Imperialism. Based on the forces of its 450,000,000 people, the Chinese nation, whose history is five thousand years old, will undoubtedly vanquish the Japanese robbers and ultimately shake off the yoke of Japanese imperialism. To achieve this goal, the firm and lasting unity of the Chinese national is necessary.

Japanese Imperialism fears the unification of the national forces of China. Through its Trotskyist agents, through pro-Japanese elements, and through special organs, it strives, above all, to disrupt the co-operation between the Kuomintang and the Communist Party. It attempts to create a strained relationship between the national and local governments, between the army of the Central Government and the provincial troops, and to undermine the inner unity of the Kuomintang itself. In this manner it seeks to undermine the confidence of the Chinese masses in their own forces and in their victory. It is clear that Japanese Imperialism will utilise every difference of opinion within the national camp of China for the purpose of weakening the Anti-Japanese National United Front.

To be sure the Anti-Japanese National United Front has already been formed but it is not yet strong enough. The necessary close connection, between the parties participating in the united front, does not yet exist. The pro-Japanese counter-revolutionary bandits are still concealed in some organisations and continue their undermining activity secretly and sometimes even openly. In the right wing circles of the Kuomintang, there are some people who are working to weaken the forces of the Communist Party and to dissolve the Party. They sow all kinds of suspicion which harms the united front. All this is undoubtedly an obstacle on the road to the further development of the Anti-Japanese National United Front.

The Communist Party is of the opinion, that the strengthening and extension of the Anti-Japanese National Front, is the preconditions for China's ultimate victory ever Japanese imperialism. The Communist Party, the Kuomintang, the other anti-Japanese parties, troops, and mass organisations must intensify their vigilance against Japanese imperialism, and its Trotskyist provocateurs. All these parties have the duty of establishing the closest connection and co-operation, without surrendering

their political and organisational independence. The collaboration of these parties must test upon mutual confidence and mutual aid. All of them bear a common responsibility for the salvation of the country. In common, they acknowledge the principle: "*Above all, resistance to Japan!*" "*Everything subordinate to the interests of resistance to Japan.*"

The strengthening and extension of the Anti-Japanse National United Front does not merely consist in the collaborating parties coming closer together and establishing closer connections. It is necessary that all political parties bring together the broadest masses, especially the workers, peasants, and all toilers, into various anti-Japanese armed and unarmed mass organisations, in order to give the united front strong mass base.

Only by the organisation and mobilisation of the broadest masses will the forces of the people grow day by day. Tremendous tasks confront the national united front. The broadest masses of people must be organised for resistance to Japan, and the able-bodied adults must be mobilised, for the formation of new divisions of troops, and for active participation in guerilla warfare. The productivity of labour in the factories and fields must be increased, in order to secure an adequate supply of industrial and agricultural products for the armies fighting against Japan. The government has the task of giving the people democratic liberites, of resolutely nullifying the activities of the betrayers of the fatherland, of the Trotskyist bandits and other Japanese spies, of improving the life of the toiling masses, reorganising the Government apparatus and enabling it to lead to the fullest extent, the war of national liberation.

Since the Extraordinary Congress of the Kuomintang, in March of last year, the Central Chinese Government has already begun to adapt its policies to the interests of the war of defense. In the sphere of foreign policy, it is making efforts to establish closer ties with those countries and nations that sympathise all its might against Japanese aggression. In the sphere of domestic policy, the Government adopted a series of decisions, which are in accord with the demand for democratic liberties of the people. It decided to reorganise the government apparatus and form a political council for the defence industry. It adopted a series of measures for improving the condition of the masses and came out more decisively than before against the betrayers of the fatherland and those officials who do not fulfil their duties. This policy of the government corresponds to the interests of uniting the national forces, for the conduct of a long-drawn-out war. All anti-Japanese parties unconditionally support these progressive measures of the Kuomintang and of the government and will fight resolutely for their fulfilment.

The Perspectives of the Anti-Japanese National United Front

In China's present situation, there are peculiarities which deserve the greatest attention.

Japanese Imperialism has occupied a number of China's most important cities and a considerable part of its territory. It proceeds against the Chinese people with the greatest brutality, plunders it, rapes the women, and murders hundreds of thousands of peaceful inhabitants. Its aim is the destruction of the Chinese nation. All this intensifies the hatred of the Chinese people for

Japanese militarism. The Chinese people arise to the struggle for their life, their property, in defence of their fatherland and their most elementary human rights. In the face of this people's movement, capitulation before Japan, and an agreement with Japanese Imperialism, encounter the decided resistance of the entire Chinese people.

Japan's attempt to transform China into a Japanese colony also affects the interests of England, America, and other countries. Therefore Japanese Imperialism becomes involved in growing contradictions with the other countries too. The international isolation of Japan is an aid to the Chinese people.

The Chinese revolution of 1925-27 occurred in a period of the partial stabilisation of capitalism. The capitalist states resisted with relative unanimity every revolution. Therefore, the international conditions for the Chinese Revolution were unfavourable then. But the Anti-Japanese struggle today is developing in a world which is filled with the struggle for democracy and freedom, and against fascism, a world in which the peace front is strenthening and developing. Thanks to these circumstances the struggle of the Chinese people against Japanese imperialism calls forth the sympathy and support of the toiling masses in the other countries. Thus the conditions for the national war of liberation against Japanese Imperialism are far more favouralbe today than those of the first Chinese revolution.

The Chinese nation is confronted with great historical tasks—to smash the forces of Japanse imperialism and build an independent, free, democratic Chinese republic. In its appeal of December, 1937, the Communist Party declared that it is fighting honestly, hand in hand with the Kucmintang and other parties, not only for the salvation of the fatherland from Japanese imperialsim, but is also filled with the determination, after victory in the war of defence against Japan, to build up a new Chinese state together with the Kuomintang. From this, it is clear, that the Communist Party of China considers its collaboration with the Kuomintang, not as a war alliance of short duration but as an alliance for a long period of time. This collaboration will insure the further mobilisation of the Chinese people in the struggle for national liberation and the independenee of China and will open up new paths for the transformation of China into a great, free, and progressive state.

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THE NEW AGE.

MANDATES—INTER-IMPERIALISM OR INTERNATIONALISM

By B. Ashe

The possession of an Empire is not without profit to the possessing country. Before the White Man with the help of writers like Sir Norman Angell, started shouldering an economic as well as a moral burden, traders, manufacturers and investors had discovered the profitability and the potential markets of the Empire. So nearly £ 900,000,000 has been invested in the Colonies and India alone. Germany and Italy are not blind to these facts.

It is often suggested that we should forget the past history—and profits—of British Imperialism, and that, in a constructive effort to restore Peace by satisfying legitimate grievances, we should share our opportunities and privileges with all comers without favour or prejudice. In other words, let us have inter-imperialism instead of rival imperialism ; let us divide the world into exploiting and exploited powers, and, by giving equality to the former and forcing agreement upon the latter, once and for all eliminate those rivalries and possessive instincts, which, in the past, have made Imperialism and War synonymous terms.

The Fallacy of Inter-Imperialism

J. A. Hobson first discovered "inter-imperialism." He points out that "if the capitalists in the several Western Powers were capable of intelligent co-operation, instead of wrangling among themselves for separate national areas of exploitation, they would have combined for a joint international enterprise in Asia, a project which might have given the whole of Western capitalism another generation of active profitable survival." *The Times* now re-discovers it and applies it to Arfica—"Such an undertaking (i.e. an international bureau or Consortium of powers, including Germany) would recognise that......there exists a vast continent of backward races whose future must be, *perhaps for centuries to come*, in the guidance of Europeans."

As far as the native populations are concerned it hardly needs arguing that inter-imperialism, stated thus crudely, is even less attractive than the imperial rule of one country. The whole proposal reveals imperialism at its worst ; the rights and aspirations of the colonial people are nowhere considered, and the decisive defect of all liberationist movements is regarded as a primary necessity. The colonies are to be regarded simply as areas for exploitation ; the colonial peoples as pawns in the diplomatic game of the Great Powers. Since Munich, we know exactly how little the right of even an independent people count in the international bargaining of fascists and reactionaries. The rights of the colonial people would count still less and the conscience of democratic people in this country would be lulled by that Hitler, not they, were to blame for atrocities sanctioned by the International Colonial Bureau.

As far as Peace is concerned, inter-imperialism is only a constructive contribution if, in fact, it *does* eliminate the rivalries of different Great Powers; if it does satisfy German claims without damagimg those of other imperial Powers. In the first place, it may certainly be said that Germany will not be satisfied; she has said that she will not be, and there is conclusive evidence for believing that this statement on her behalf is true. What she needs is not free and equal access to raw materials and markets, but exclusive political control over them; the whole of German economy—so precarious that it must expand or collapse—is such that it cannot compete on equal terms or in collaboration with other imperialisms. It needs colonies in order to control their production and bring them within her exclusive economic and currency system. Finally, because her colonial ambitions extend far beyond the recovery of the comparatively barren tracts taken from her after the war, Germany needs colonies for military and strategic reasons, as bases for a coming war of re-division.

Those who advocate, in whatever terms, some sort of inter-imperialism regard the imperialist phase of capitalism as something static and formal. They admit that it is suffering from some 'disorder', but when seeking a solution to present evils, they dismiss these 'disorders' as irrelevant growths which are not really part of the system. But the present-day violent revulsion from free exchange, collapse of world purchasing power, the necessity of capitalism to find new markets whilst failing to feed and clothe its own workers—all these disorders are essential symptoms of *capitalism in decay*. Rivalry and discord amongst the capitalist countries is inevitable in the decline of capitalism; inter-imperialism is a phantasy in the brains of those who still think of capitalism as expending and developing. As a contribution to Peace in the period of capitalist decline, it is worse than useless, because the forces of conflict are greater than those of common interest. Britain herself has long ago thrown Free Trade overboard; she requires exclusive control over markets just as much as Germany does. The best colonial areas are primarily agrarian and are suffering acutely from the permanent crisis in agricultural prices; colonial markets are, therefore, contracting, not expanding. This contraction creates desperate rivalries which lead to war; the fear of war makes every country anxious to secure political control over strategic bases and those raw materials of which some colonies hold a monopoly.

Paths to the Solution of the Colonial Problem

Imperialism has no random link with the present international crisis; it lives at the heart of it. What then, as far as colonies are concerned, are the possible policies?

(1) The cession of colonies to Germany.

(2) The refusal to cede colonies and maintenance by forces of the *status quo*.

(3) International control of colonial areas.

(4) Independence for colonies.

As far as the first two alternatives are concerned, has to only dismiss them as impracticable policies, whether regarded from the angle of world peace or the legitimate demands of

the native populations. Few people seriously maintain, either that Germany would be placated by the return to her of her former colonies, or would, as a result, be likely to moderate her future demands; or that since the Jewish pogroms, Nazi Germany is fit to rule colonies. In any case we cannot use the colonial peoples as pawns to be moved hither and thither in the manoeuvres of international diplomacy. Similarly, to preserve, if necessary by force, the *status quo* and Britain's enormous privileges in the field of colonial exploitation, is to preserve something that is inherently unjust and conducive to war.

What I am chiefly concerned with in this article, is to discuss what future there is for some kind of *internationalisation* of colonial areas, and what relation such internationalisation bears to theories of inter-imperialism.

All theories of 'inter-nationalisation' derive their inspiration, as far as progressive people are concerned, from disgust with the whole business of imperialism, and a desire to renounce exclusive control of markets, etc. These feelings are based upon the knowledge, that imperialism is the root of war, and that imperialists cannot be trusted to govern colonial territories in the interests, or for the material advantage, of the native populations. It is suggested, therefore, that whilst India, Burma, Ceylon and some of the West Indian islands are "ripe" for immediate independence, the "backward" areas of Africa should be placed under international control.

Schemes of International Control

In descending order of idealism, schemes for internationalisation are put forward as follows :—

(a) International administration by the League, i.e. a Mandate System, from which the element of national control and responsibility would be removed. Administrative policy, both in the economic and political sphere, to be international and the administrative services internationally recruited.

(b) An extension and strengthening of the present Mandate System, under which national authorities are accountable to a Permanent Mandates Commission.

(c) A joint colonial administration of various Imperialist Powers outside the League system.

The first of these schemes is at any rate honest in its idealism—in fact so honest and so idealistic in its conception, that its advocates hasten to admit that it is today impracticable. International morality has suffered so seriously since Munich that it would be fantastic to pretend that the League authority was strong enough to break down a lifetime of imperialist conceptions of rule. What is not fully recognnised is that in fact such outright internationalisation would, under any conditions, be impracticable as it is incompatible with the fundamental principles of imperialism. Imperialism would have to be destroyed first.

By extension of the Mandate System it is meant that an increased number, if not all of British and French colonies should come under the system. The main principles of Mandatory rule, as laid down at present, are: the material and moral well-being of natives; prohibition of raising native armies; maintenance of the "open door"; abolition of slavery, forced labour, etc.; submis-

sion of an annual report to the League. None of these, as will be seen, are very revolutionary demands striking at the roots of imperialism or political control by an individual imperialist country. The first is merely a pious hope, meaning anything or nothing. The prohibition against raising native armies has been circumvented by establishing natives "to preserve Law and Order"; the articles dealing with slavery, etc. deal with principles already accepted, but not necessarily honoured, in non-mandated territories. Finally, the "open door" is now barely ajar. Figures for export and import trade show that even in mandated territories the mandatory power manages to secure an overwhelming share. For instance, in the French Mandate, 46% of exports and 56% of imports trade is with the mother country; in the Japanese mandates the extent is 97% and 95% respectively!

The proposals to strengthen the Mandates System generally consist of recommendations:

(i) That the Mandates Commission should have the power to visit and inspect the colonial territories ;

(ii) That representatives of the Mandated territories should be on the Mandates Commission ;

(iii) That the natural resources of the colonies should be placed in the public ownership of the native population ;

(iv) That capital investment and loans should be arranged for, through the League of Nations, on the analogy of the Public Loans Board in Britain.

The last two recommendations are, of course, revolutionary and incompatible with Imperialism ; they are, therefore, incompatible with imperialism and no sort of "appeasement" as far as Hitler is concerned. Fundamentally, as long as individual imperialist countries are responsible for the administration of the Colonies, so long international control is futile. Lord Lugard regards "administration by Committees as at best unsatisfactory"; whilst Lord Hailey admits that it is unlikely that the mandatory system will result in the development of uniform methods of administration or the acceptance of a philosophy of rule......which differs greatly from that prevailing in their own colonies." We know, or ought to have learnt, that League supervision is of little use, if unsupported by any power of exerting coercive pressure. Nobody has yet put forward any proposals for granting the Permanent Mandates Commission such powers ; in fact it would not be possible to do so without liquidating Imperialism.

Realizing these difficulties most advocates of internationalism unconsciously tend towards the third alternative, as the only practical solution today. In effect, this alternative amounts to no more than Hobson,s inter-imperialism or Van Zeeland's proposal for chartered companies, to be formed for the purpose of the "international" exploitation of colonial areas. In following the line of least resistance such internationalists find themselves in the unwelcome company of *The Times* and *The Daily Mail* and Mr. Oswald Pirow. They fail to see that this kind of internationalism is international in name only: that the only form of Mandate System, that is at all international, is impracticable, because, it seeks to combine imperialism with the process of freeing the colonial people ; that the only practicable form of the

Mandate System is simple inter-imperialism.

Complete Emancipation—The Real Solution

If you take these two theories of internationalization and inter-imperialism, and if you put the two side by side and compare them, it turns out that they are clear contraries at their far edges, but that they shade into one another towards their near edges, and, in the sphere of what is practicable, they merge and become indistinguishabie. All these various schemes for internationalisation prove to be unacceptable, because, in practice, they do no more than provide sheep's clothing for the inter-imperialist wolf.

What then is left? I cannot here elaborate either the necessity nor the means of emancipating the Colonies. The development of so-called "backward" areas can only take place by a merger of land and labour with capital and technology. The former will be provided by Africans, the latter by Europeans. But contrary to the theory and practice of imperialists, democrats must insist that mastery, i.e., political control, must vest in those who supply the labour and the land. So long as you are dealing with capitalist governments, any kind of international control, will be simply designed to secure and perpetuate European mastery over African labour and land. This mastery, we know, breeds imperialist rivalries and war; it also takes no account of the social, moral or material advancement of the native population.

If you want to secure the opposite result, what must you do? Clearly you must see to it that the Colonial Government machine is hitched to the only available other source of power, namely the group interests of the African People themselves. In other words, you must seriously and deliberately encourage the colonial liberationist movement, because the only peaceful solution to the dangers bred by imperialism, and the only sure guarantee of the welfare of the natives, is the emancipation of the Colonial People.

RAJKOT

A REVIEW OF STRUGGLE

S. A. Dange

(Since the article was written, Sir Maurice Gwyer, who was appointed to arbitrate in the dispute between the representative of the Indian National Congress and the Thakore Saheb, has given his verdict, entirely vindicating the position taken by Sirdar Patel. The award says—"There is no doubt that the Thakore Saheb undertook to appoint persons whom Sirdar Patel recommended, and, therefore, reserved no right to reject those whom he did not approve."—Ed.)

Rajkot was a struggle that could be made into an epic—may be a bit soft to read compared to the grim tales of severe shootings in Dhenkanal, of the inhuman battering to death of innocent men in pious Travancore, or of the massacre of Viduraswatham. But an epic does not come of mere grimness or ghastly massacres. Rajkot was a finished piece in many ways. To the vulgar critic it appeared only as the Mahatma's trick on Tripuri. But viewed as the climax of a phase in the mighty states struggle, it shows all the vastness, the

depth and unbreakable might, of the masses, the river and the granite rocks of the Tripuri Congress.

Rajkot Pulls Down Haripura

Rajkot pulls down in practice, though it still stands in theory, the Haripura phase of the Congress vis-a-vis the states struggle. Congress with its prestige and its past as an organisation was not to "interfere" in any of the state's, struggle. Though scarcely was the ink dry on that Haripura when every Congress leader of repute, whose life-history meant Congress-history, had his hand in the affairs of some of the big states and their fight with the Congress. Sirdar Patel went and settled Mysore, and Mahatmaji gave advice on Travancore. Even the insistance not to call states organisations by the name "Congress" had broken down in the face of the opposition of the Mysore Congressmen. The masses in the Congress standing on both sides of the boundaries that separated India from the states, broke down the Haripura wall.

Of course, a year after, the Mahatma himself confesses that that is what he desired. "It was a perfect piece of statesmanship." "Constitutionalism, legality and such other things are good enough within their respective spheres, but they become a drag on human progress, immediately the human mind has broken these artificial bonds and flies higher. Without any spur from any outside agency I saw at once that there must be *intervention by the Congress* of the type you see today. People say I have changed my view......I am the same. There has been a gradual evolution in my environment and I react to it as a Satyagrahi"—says the Mahatma in an exclusive interview to the *Times of India* on January 24th, a month after the first settlement of Rajkot and just over a month before *his* intervention, that is "*Congress* intervention" of the *type* you see today."

What was that "evolution in the environment" to which the great Satyagrahi reacted, so swiftly, correctly and shrewdly, that he has opened up quite a new vista in the anti-Imperialist struggle full of hopes and dangers as well? For that we have to understand the background of the States sector of our anti-Imperialist front, the peculiarities of Rajkot, its society, its state, the Prince and his Diwan, the masses and the men.

Importance of Rajkot

Rajkot is one of 143 states comprising the Kathiawar Agency. The Political Agent of Imperialism, in the Western India Group of states, has his seat in Rajkot. Hence every big chief in Kathiawar has a palace in Rajkot.

With a population of about 80 thousand it has not more souls than of twenty textile mills in Bombay and three fourths of this is in the City itself and the rest in 64 villages. Accounts of the Rajkot treasury are a mystery. Rs. 15 lacs is supposed to be the annual income of this state, not more than the annual wages-bill of an average Bombay mill-owner.

The basic social relations of this tiny principality are feudal through and through, now challenged by the rising democratic bourgeoisie. All, or most of the land, is owned by the lords or the King, who receive rent in kind and taxes, from the cultivators, which are serf-relations converted into payment in kind or money. Veth-begar, the hall-mark

of serfdom is there and one of the taxes, I understand, is named Kanya Choori, possibly a variant of the "Lord's" right of first night over the serf's wife. The Kingdom is the king's personal property and the treasury his own purse. In social-political structure, it is a real "relic of the past."

Reign of Sir Lakhaji

Nine years ago, though feudal, it was saved from being barbarous. In a backward economy of a small kingdom of three hundred square miles, if a king could become a patriarch, a relic of the barbarous past looks pleasing. Rajot was like that in the reign of Lakhaji Raj, the father of the present Thakore Saheb. Mahatma Gandhi's father was the Diwan of Rajkot for many years and Sir Lakhaji treated the Mahatma as his Guru. It is such "relics of the past" that the Mahatma would like to retain.

But Sir Lakhaji was a personal accident. The contradiction between the feudal state and the new social economy is inherent, not an accident. The personal accident only hides the barbarity of the old order.

Sir Lakhaji personally administered and benevolenty, though, as a feudal king. He went to the peasants and heard them, established a Praja Pratinidhi Mandal with adult franchise, but no power to challenge the budget, started a State Bank, a State Textile Mill, a State Electric Concern. He even instituted monopolies and farmed out taxes to the highest bidder, thus completing the feudal state in every detail—a Dwarfish Chandra Gupta by whose side a giant Mahatma and a movement were growing.

Feudal Rot Begins

Sir Lakhaji died in 1930 and the present Thakore 29 year old came to the gadi and fell into the clutches of Diwan Virawala. The personal accident in Rajkot history, that had prevented monopolies and tax-farming from showing their barbarous roots, that is the good "Babu" Lakhaji having been removed, the system began to work out its logic.

Prices fell, treasury income fell, but the money value of the King's luxury remained same. The treasury was not public nor under public control; it was private purse, which serf-labour, monopolies and tax-farming had to fill. From 1932 to 1936 Rs. 58,92,018 came to the treasury; while the state expenditure was Rs. 30,98,263 the King alone spent an equivalent amount. There was no balance.

The monopolies tightened; tax farmers went mad; the state became merely a robber. It robbed every class except its bureaucracy. Even its feudal supports were crumbling.

The Demands of Democracy

We know enough of the rise of the democratic bourgeoisie and its fate under monopolies and tax-farming, to understand how it must have ranged itself against this state. Free trading and competitive rates of profit had vanished. The merchant capitalist with his wares, and the peasant with his produce, both lost their mutual economic relations. The state granaries, receiving rent in kind and dues from Tax Gatheres, killed the peasant in collections and as the sole biggest trader maimed him in the market. Monopolies froze capital, as well as commodity circu-

lation. Shopkeepers, merchants, importers, all those forces that have shed their lurid glare and blood over the history of the classical French Revolution, the pillars of democracy, competition, equality etc., confronted Virawala, the Diwan, "the relic of the past," as the King was buried in the Harem and its tavern. In economic wrath, the bourgeoisie confronted feudalism with a political axe—demanded self-Government, demanded destruction of the monopolies in Sugar, Matches, Ice, Cinema, Cloth and what not. In the British area, next door in the Residency, everything was 50% cheaper than in the State area.

Workers Set the Spark

The economic contradiction may sharpen, political discontent accumulate, but it requires a good spark to ignite. Who provided it in Rajkot? *That honour goes to the Workers of the Rajkot Textile Mill.*

To raise more income, Diwan Virawala cut the wages of the Textile workers in September 1936 by 12%. The workers worked 14 hours, whereas in British Territory they were demanding and getting wage-increase for nine hours of work. The workers replied with a strike. Virawala arrested 16 of them deported them. The capital awoke. The political workers for Democracy protested. Virawala was taken aback, and yielded. That was the first victory.

Rajkot rose as a man and the Praja Parishad became its mouth-piece. An anti-monopoly drive began. Virawala fell ill, and appointed his son Bhojwala as Diwan who in his turn sacked the old officers and put in his own favourites. Even the State bureaucracy now started moving. All the conditions of a "National Crisis" that Lenin has laid down for a successful blow against the State came into existence. The Praja Parishad that was groping with the fetters of constitutionalism decided to resort to civil disobedience, to revolt, on 25th July 1938.

Gambling dens had been licenced by the state. They were picketted. There was lathi charge on 15th August. The Praja Parishad leader Sjt. Dhebar was arrested, with a host others.

The Revolt-Begins

Herein entered a new factor, a peculiarity of all the Kathiawar states. It must be remembered that the biggest and in fact most of the traders and bankers of Bombay come from the Western India States and Gujerat. A merchant or his leader hit in Kathiawar at once finds its echo in Bombay and even beyond. Kathiawar gives birth to a feudal Bhayat, exports him, turns him into a "bourgeois" in the centre of the Indian Empire, Bombay, and this man turns round and confronts the relic of the past with a demand for democracy. Merchantry in Bombay protested and intervened; Dhebar and others were released.

Praja Conference Demands

Soon a Praja Conference with the active guidance and participation of Sardar Patel was held on 5th of September 1938. Thousands of peasants started for the Capital. They were prevented, decoyed, bullied; but they came. "Abolish monopolies, reduce land revenue by 15%, revive the Praja Pratinidhi Sabha, fix the civil list to 10% of the state revenue, grant Self-Government." Merchants, Peasants, Students, Women, Workers, all lined up behind the demands—*a real democratic front of all the progressive classes had begun to act, to overtrhow the feudal state.*

It became more and more difficult to keep the State from crumbling. The boycott of the bank, of mill cloth, of the Ijaras, electric supply, breaking of monopolies and etc., dried up the revenues of the State.

But mere economic pressure and dislocation of the state structure cannot overthrow a state and create a new one in its place. Economic pressure can be overcome by a loan. Had not Czarism survived and saved itself from financial collapse in 1905 as a result by an international loan? If the states were confronted with an economic boycott, a no-rent campaign and mass-struggle, they, unaided and isolated, would not be able to withstand the onslaught. Neither their economic nor military power is enough. Hence the imperialist state, guarantees them help in case of internal disorders. Imperialism in British India, oppressor of the masses, renders active help to the despots in the states, oppressor of their masses. If so, should not the Congress fight the British intervention on the side of the despots by its own mass intervention on the side of the masses? Haripura resolution still said "*NO.*"

September Repression

September days were the days of international crisis in Europe. War was in the air. The states were an important base in the Imperialist military system. If the states people were not beaten, they would beat down the imperialist arm in the states. Active imperialist intervention was a necessity.

But that required some excuse of an open armed revolt. In its absence intervention had to be secret. In fact, intervention as such is never absent. "Those, who know anything of these Residents (British Representatives) and the States, know in what dread the Princes stand of even their secretaries and peons. I write from personal knowledge......" writes Gandhiji (3-2-39) in reply to the Government of India.

In September, the Government of India chose to send a strong British Diwan, Sir Patric Cadell to settle Rajkot affairs. He flew down to India and assumed charge on 12th September.

Sir Patric followed the usual policy of "Kicks and Kisses," concessions and repression. He released a few leaders to regotiate settlement, called prominent merchants for interview, threatened confiscation of property ; but nothing came of it.

30th September saw the beginning of Peasant marches to the Capital, as the decree of 23rd had forbidden townsmen from going to the villages. On 8th October a few concessions in Rent were announced to the peasants, but they remained unmoved.

Again the interprovincial ramification of the Rajkot merchantry came to the rescue. The Rajkot mill cloth was boycotted in Ahmedabad, Bhavanagar, Bombay, Cawnpore. The Rajkot bourgeoisie had spread beyond the shores of India. The Kathiawar Merchants in Djibouti in far off Abyssinia sent Rs. 820 for the struggle. Those in Zanzibar decided on an economic boycott of Rajkot.

On 11th October, Cadell announced cancellation of some monopolies. But on 12th the women started Satyagraha and 13th saw the town horror-stricken to learn that 8 peasants were assaulted and Savji Patel a great fighter was killed. Rajkot gave him a funeral worthy of a national hero.

Palace Intrigues—Virawala

The coming of Cadell had changed the co-relation of forces within the Palace intrigues, if intrigues can be forces. Just as in the social composition of the leadership, the demands of the people of Rajkot remind us of the classic French Revolution, so do its intrigues of the Court of Louis. "Kathiawar is noted for its intrigues. It contains a race of politicians whose one aim in life is self-advancement; it is also known to contain the stuff of which heroes are made"—wrote the Mahatma. Intrigue in Rajkot was personified in Virawala. For once intrigue seemed to baffle imperialism, for a time at any rate.

Much of the Rajkot tangle cannot be unravelled if you do not know Virawala. He had been a Diwan of several Kathiawar States. Himself a Talukdar of Natwanager, he combined cruelty with intrigue, shrewdness with determination. He had efficiency in his intrigues. He quailed only before the masses, when they stood as one iron wall. "It was necessary for my mission to warn the Thakoresaheb of the overpowering influence that he exercises over his Highness. Sober and influential persons, not few but many, have repeatedly told me that so long as Durbar Virawala exercised that influence upon the Thakore Saheb there is no peace for the people"—wrote the Mahatma, when two months later the peoples' victory was smitten down by Virawala. When confronted with the moral might of the masses in the person of the Mahatma, he was found to be "incapable of keeping his resolution from moment to moment." Sardar Patel said of him, "the man tells four lies per minute." Since his illness in 1936 he rarely stirred out. He rarely speaks. When he is not asleep, he is reticent. It was with such a man that the Congress, the people, the Mahatma, Cadell, the British Resident and every one had to deal with. They all wanted him to go, but he held the king under his "overpowering influence." Give Virawala a string of beads and a beard, and a canvass as large as the Czarist State, he would appear as uncanny as Rasputin.

The British Diwan—Cadell

Cadell, backed by the authority of the Crown Representative of Imperialism tried to replace Virawala by himself but he had not the Thakore in his hand. But Virawala was threatened into submission. He quietly left Rajkot on October 21st—only to bide his time.

But, the British Dewan overdid himself. "He acted as if he were the master. He traded upon the fact that he belonged to the ruling race and his appointment was subject to the sanction of the Central Authority, and as such thought he could do what he liked"—says the Mahatma from the documents in his possession.

Virawala awaited to wreak his vengeance on Cadell. He from behind egged on the Thakore to make moves of peace with Patel. The other Ruling Chiefs of Kathiawar dreaded prospect of a peoples' victory. If Rajkot fell, princely feudal Kathiawar would go. But their personal pride and feudal vanity itched to kick out the British Diwan. They would prefer Virawala to Cadell. "Correspondence in my possession shows that the Ruling Chiefs have seriously asked themselves, whether it is wisdom to have Europeans as their Diwans," says Gandhiji. But to kick out Cadell and the insolent British Agent, a mighty force was required, that could be used for a

time for the Princes and then to be overthrown. Such a force was the Congress and hence negotiations with Patel. The Diwan of a neighbouring state put in his services, though the Chancellor of the Princes Chamber, the Jam Saheb, on November 6th warned the Thakore against making any statement that would create precedent and jeopardise the other princes. For, Rajkot was "the hub of Kathiawar."

Delhi A.I.C.C.

Thus in the on-rushing flood of the mass movement, various miner interests clashed and had their own reactions. The fear of the chiefs towards the British Resident made them detest the European despots ; but the masses demanding liberty from feudal despotism frightened them more. Were not the revolutionaries calling for a clean-up of these stinking pools of feudalism, intrigue and corruption ? Jawaharlal, inspite of his justification of the Haripura policy of non-intervention, had not minced words. But Congress Assurances in the A.I.C.C. resolution of the Delhi meeting of September 25th drew them towards some settlement. "In spite of the declarations of some Congressmen to the contrary, the corporate policy of the Congress must be one of continuous attempt to convert the Princes"......"to a voluntary surrender of power to the people"—*to convert not to overthrow.* It is always easy for a convert to revert. Not that in a philosophy of overthrow there is no danger of the enemy. The Convert enemy can still remain an enemy in the guise of a pious penitent waiting to pounce in his own time.

The A.I.C.C. took note of the Travancore repression, the Hyderabad ordinances, and shootings in Dhenkanal, Talcher etc. The people appealed to the Congress for help. But the A.I.C.C. reiterated "its policy of non-interference" and at the same time the policy "to help the people in every way open to the Congress," consistently with its resources.

The A.I.C.C. was on the horns of the War crisis, so much so that the Working Committee on 22nd September decided "in view of the problems arising out of the war situation to continue to sit from day to day at Delhi," and it did, it seems, till 2nd October.

In such a situation, the states struggle had to be repressed by Imperialism, which would not allow any Prince "to voluntarily surrender power," though in official pronouncements the policy of the Paramount Power was declared to be "non-interference" if a Prince chose to bestow any constitutional reforms on his people. But in practice Imperialism *could not allow its military reserves to be dominated by the Congress in the states, so long as the Congress did not change its attitude of resistance to war.*

Tea & First Settlment

But when the tension of the crisis was loosened the minor factors referred to above had scope for play. By December end the Thakore of Rajkot "took the reins in his hands, overruled the English Diwan's advice and the known wishes of the Resident." Deep-rooted fear and hectic courage shook him. He sent notes. Sirdar Patel, flew by Aeroplane to the Palace on 25th December for "tea at 5 P.M." "The tea lasted for eight hours, till 1-42 A.M. An agreement was drafted incorporating complete satisfaction of all the demands of Democracy. The draft was Gandhiji's own. What was not in the draft was agreed to

in a small note passed by the Thakore to the Sirdar, which embodied the spirit that was really to govern the future state. The negotiations were delicate and hence this famous note was not published as part of the agreement. "This is a well-known procedure adopted in delicate negotiations"—wrote the Mahatma, when the convert had betrayed him and the people, and denounced the agreement just three weeks after.

The Sirdar returned by air to Bombay. 26th December was a day of Triumph. With a gorgeous Arch and Triumphal Procession Bombay greeted the heroes of Rajkot. Cadell sailed for Europe a fortnight later.

Betrayal Planned

Even before Cadell had left Virawala was back in Rajkot. The Thakore had written to Sirdar Patel on the very morrow of the agreement the following: "I appreciate very much the way in which you helped me in ending the impasse.

"I think you are fully aware by now that Diwan Saheb Virbhai has been most loyal to me and my state.

"Now I request you to do your best to remove any misunderstanding existing in the minds of my people against him." (Appendix to the Published Correspondence. *Harijan*, 4th Feb. 1939.)

The Sirdar was asked to reinstate in the favour of the masses the man who told "four lies a minute", had ruined the state, the Thakore and the masses. There was enough indication of the future in this fawning letter of a profligate weakling.

Imperialism was quick to attack. Minutes of a meeting held at the Residency on 28th December and published by the Mahatma reveal the moves behind the screen. Mr. Gibson the Resident censured the Thakore for the settlement, for calling in the Congress and Patel. Plans were laid to break the settlement.

Imperialist War and the States

Rajkot is a speck on the States Map—eighty thousand souls and twelve lacs income. Why was imperialism so determined to prevent Congress influence in such a small miserable state and prevent the liberalising of its constitution? In general, Imperialism resisted Congress influence everywhere as an expression of the mass movement for freedom. But in particular, just at this juncture the *strategy of War and the Federation decided its attitude towards the movement in the states.* The states must remain as important bases of military reserves to be thrown against the Indian masses as well as the foreign enemy, when the occasion demanded. With eight provinces under the Congress Ministries, some amount of difficulty had already cropped up in the September crisis. The Congress ministries could not be relied upon, though it was no difficult job to throw them out if war demanded it. But to keep them in saddle and yet to have a safe base, the best grounds were the states.

Sir Michael O'Dwyer, the hero of Jallianwala Bag, who had known enough of the anti-war risings in the Punjab wrote to the *Times* of London "contrasting the loyalty of the states with the resolution of the Congress during the recent war crisis" and asking the states to demand the protection of the Paramount Power against the Congress.

The Chancellor of the Princes Chamber in his report of Work of 1937-1938

stated "the question of the reorganisation of the Indian State's forces was thoroughly examined by a Committee of Ministers under the resourceful chairmanship of Samd. Yar Jung, Army Secretary of the Hyderabad State, the Rajas of Bikaner, Patiala and the Jam Saheb met the Chatfield Committee to consider the military and financial problem in the event of a war. The Chancellar also reported that the question of attachment of British Liaison officers to Indian State forces' Units in the event of civil disturbances in the states have been satisfactorily settled.

The problem of Indian military strength had developed greater importance than in the last war because of the changed alignment of forces in the international field. The existence of the Soviet in the North, Revolutionary China on the Eastern borders, as well as an unfriendly Japan, a strongly organised movement of independence inside the country, are some of the new factors that were absent in 1914. They make conversion of India into an independent complete arm of the Imperialist military machine a necessity. Speaking on army organisation, Mr. Hoare Belisha, Secretary of State for War, said recently, "*We intend to regard the Middle East Reserve as a separate force, freed from the necessity of drawing on our home resources.* It will be held for use anywhere within the radius of our interests in that part of the world." The decision is reported to be a sequel to the discussions between the C.I.G.S. India, Air Officer Commanding India and the Chatfield's Committee.

On this background could anyone hope that Imperialism could allow the maritime states of Kathiawar, and the land routes of Gwalior, Jaipur etc. forming a chain to guide the R.A.F. from London, to Karachi and the East, to be surrounded by Congress masses and Congress authority?

Imperialism knew that the fall of Rajkot meant the end of the Kathiawar and Central India system. On January 10th it was reported "the pace of agitation for popular reforms in no less than nine states of Western India and Kathiawar has been quickened by the success achieved in Rajkot. Bhavanagar, Palitana and Limbdi were about to send drafts of reforms to the Mahatma. The Mahatma wrote "It is to be hoped that the Ruling Chiefs who stand in awe of the Resident will know from the Rajkot example that if they are strong and if they have their people really at their back, they have nothing to fear from the Resident." (*Harijan* 9-1-39).

Imperialism decided to still pursue its line of pure repression and no quarters to the Congress in the states.

Congress Majority Denied

It was part of the Rajkot agreement that the Reforms Committee was to consist of ten members, seven of whom were to be nominated by the Prince on the recommendation of Sirdar Patel. The understanding that the seven were to be Sirdar Patel's nominees was contained in that famous separate note of the Thakore Saheb. The Sardar submitted his seven names. The Thakore was advised to reject three thus reducing the Congress strength to a minority in the Committee, while the fundamental point of the Agreement was that the Congress was to have a safe majority in order to ensure a real self-Government scheme. The Thakore rejected the plea that he was bound to accept Sirdar

Patel's nominees and advanced the excuse that the Bhayats and Mussalmans wanted their representation.

On 12th January a news was published that Durbar Rawatwala had gone to Jamnagar personally to take delivery of the loan of four lacs of rupees.

On the same day Sri M. Patel on behalf of the Thakore wrote to Sirdar Patel that his three nominees could not be accepted. That meant the end of the settlement.

Simultaneously the Jaipur Durbar (that is its British Prime Minister) stiffened itself against the Praja Mandal and Jamnalal Bajaj.

Will Congress Attack or Retreat ?

In the camp of the national leadership there was consternation at the murder of the Political Agent of the Orissa States, Major Bazelgette on 5th January by an infuriated people, at Ranpur, near the Raja's palace. On hearing the news some panicky interviews were given by a few Congress leaders calling for a review of the states struggle. Imperialism expected the Congress to beat a retreat as it did at the time of Chouri Choura.

To add to this there was division in the Congress leadership and ranks on the question of President Bose's re-election which threatened to develop into a serious split. Time was opportune to challenge the Congress in the states and smash the Rajkot victory.

The Rajkot Durbar refused the Congress majority on the Reforms Committee, the terms of reference were altered and the time limit set up for the Report that is the end of January was omitted from the Durbar's proclamation.

Sirdar Patel published all the correspondence including the famous little note of the Thakore Saheb and resumed civil disobedience on 25th January exactly a month after the day of victory. The country awaited with suspense the Mahatma's reactions. Soon he came out with a thundering statement, which showed unmistakably that he was out on one of his famous fights.

Mahatma States the Issue

The Mahatma completely changed the character of this second Rajkot struggle, not in its technique, but in the formulation of the issues. He attributed the breach of the Pact directly to Imperialist intervention. "The struggle now is not between the Ruler and his people but in the reality it is between the Congress and British Government represented by the British Resident, who is reported to be resorting to organised 'goondaism'. In Jaipur, the British Prime Minister is determined to prevent even a movement for popularising the ideal for responsible Government. In my opinion it is the duty of the Viceroy to ask the Resident of Rajkot to restore the Pact and to ask the British Prime Minister of Jaipur to lift the bans."

This communique of the Mahatma from Bardoli on 31st January was answered the very next day from New Delhi. The answer justified the Thakore's right to change the interpretation of the note and advanced the Muslim and Bhayat demands as the cause. The reply was as usual cold and bureaucratic. The Mahatma in his counter reply was firm and almost threatening. "I repeat the charge of organised Goondaism," he said. "I suggest that as happens everywhere in India the Mussalman and Bhayat objection to the personnel of the Committee was engineered after the event......Let not a

grave tragedy be enacted while white-washing communiques are being forged in the Delhi Secretariat. This is not a war of words."

In the *Harijan* of 4th February, the Mahatma rose to his militant heights. Quoting "unimpeachable evidence of written records" he says. "It furnishes evidence of a cold-blooded breach of a solemn covenant, entered into between the Rajkot ruler and his people. And the breach has been committeed at the instance and bidding of the British Resident, who is directly linked with the Viceroy."

Workers, Peasants, Students, Merchants, Hrtisans, all were being terrorised, taken to the forests, beaten and left there. "It was not a war of words. It was a war in which people who have hitherto never been to jail nor suffered lathi blows are exposing themselves to risks.......The Resident is showing the red claws of the British lion."

Ministries to Resign

" What then is the duty of the Congress, when the people of Rajkot have to face not the Ruler and his tiny police but the Disciplined hordes of the British Empire?" (*Harijan* 4-2-39) Having posed the question, the Mahatma gave an answer which the left Congressmen have been demanding since Haripura. The Congress Ministries must intervene. It may not be their right to do so under the Constitution but the Congress Ministers have duties out-side the Constitution. If the Paramountcy of the Empire shall lie on the side of autocracy, the Paramountcy of the Congress will be on the side of the people who will show "that they are the real rulers of Rajkot."

The challenge was delivered but how was it to be acted upon in British India by the Congress? The first step suggested by the Mahatma was resignation of of the Ministries concerned—Bombay for Rajkot, Orissa for Talcher and Dhenkanal.

There was a gradual change in the environment and as a true Satyagrhi, the Mahatma reacted to it!

But the threat had no immediate effect upon the headquarters of Imperialism. The states and the imperialist bureaucracy replied the challenge with greater cruelty and repression. The Orchha State armed gangs pursued the peasants even in the Congress Provinces of U. P. and Pt. Jawaharlal had to demand their arrest and disarming by the Congress Government. The Limbdi Raj organised dacoities on people and attacked the Praja Parishad in the very presence of Mrs. Munshi the wife of the Bombay Home Minister. "Streams of wounded were brought to the hospital" she says in her statement. Imperialism was in no mood to be in a hurry about compromise.

In all this crisis the Congress as an organisation did not function—though Congressmen who counted most in the Congress, took momentous decisions. The battle between the Right and Left in the Congress was coming to a head. Wait and drift or ultimatum and strike was the question posed for decision. During the suspense, Imperialism was in no hurry to parley. So the Mahatma forced the issue.

He left for Rajkot to personally see things for himself. He saw the atrocities, he saw the States Bureaucracy and found that all his political past, his moral indignation at the moral and political degradation of the Thakore Saheb and his adviser Virawala were

not enough force to "convert" the prince or the Resident or move imperialism to intervene. The whole strength of the Congress required to be staked, the whole of India had to be mobilised.

Could he not go straight to Tripuri and there ask the Paramount Power of the Congress to hurl itself against the disciplined hordes of the British Paramountcy? He could have. But there the first task would have to be the solution of the organisational crisis within the Congress itself. The Right wing as a leadership was being questioned, if it meant serious battle. But the left had not all the millions behind them. And the Left perhaps may not have patience to hear the Mahatma. He already considered a large part of their vote, a bogus one. He could not convince and parley with such a "Congress" and wield it as "a reliable weapon in the hands of a General out for war." He decided to act as a single handed General, to hurl the moral and political strength of the Epic Hero and stake his personal life in the battle.

The Fast

The Mahatma decided to fast unto death on the 2nd of March. As if to indicate that Imperialism, stood for some liberalising of the states the Viceroy in his Jaipur, Jodhpur speeches two day earlier had said, "It is in these days of vital importance not only that an administration should be conducted on sound and up-to-date lines but that adequate provision should exist for the ventilation of legitimate grievances......" Lord Zetland the Secretary of State in his Birmingham speech on 2nd March said, "the time had come when the Paramount Power should intervene a little more actively than in past, not with a view to derogating from the sovereignty of the Princes, but for giving them advice with the object of raising the standard of their administration." Did it mean the restoration of the Rajkot Pact and a rebuke to the British Resident? If it meant anything, it should have been visible when things would be forced to a crisis. Pious expressions were plenty in the lumber rooms of history.

The fast speeded up things. All the Congress ministries one by one intimated to the Government that they would resign. Tripuri Congress was approaching. The Principal cities were going on Hartal. The left clamoured for an all-India mobilisation for struggle. The Congress, irrespective of its differences on immediate tactic, expressed in the presidential election, stood united. The Congress as a whole with its Ministries had made Rajkot an all-India issue, a Congress issue for active militant intervention by positive action—Congress Paramountcy challenged Imperialist Paramountcy. The bloodiest battle was threatened, if the Mahatma died. And the Mahatma would refuse to live unless British intervention for autocracy and against democracy in the states was nullified.

It meant Imperialism had to deal with the Congress on the question of the States. If it did by way of negotiations, would it not mean that a state of affairs had been created in which the theoretical non-intervention both by Congress and the British Government ended and the States Problem became a matter for intervention both by the Congress and the British Government? It meant that British Government admitted the Congress to a partnership in Paramountcy

just as it had done in the British Provinces through the Congress Ministries—a partnership so framed that the British Partner retired by and bye. That was Mahatma's connection. To the revolutionary left, it meant in simple words active Congress participation in the states struggle, unity of the people of the states with the people of British India, against the unity of the Princes with British Imperialism. Rajkot settlement meant the recognition by British Government of this unity.

The crisis was well timed, well planned. After five days, the Viceroy agreed to refer the question of interpretation of the Rajkot agreement to the Chief Justice of the Federal Court and giving an assurance that he would exert his influence to see that the Thakore would carry out his promises. The Mahatma broke his fast on the 7th March. On 8th he wrote in answer to what he had gained, "the life-giving fact is that Rajkot has become an All-India issue and the place of the Thakore Saheb has been taken up by the Viceroy, whose word I have no reason to doubt. Even if the Thakore Saheb had granted all my terms I should not have been sure of due fulfilment......"

Imperialist Viceroys have broken their words in the past; the people have not forgotten the fate of the Gandhi-Irwin Pact. But today the very position of Imperialism requires that the states autocracy should be liberilised so that it became an efficient machine with at least some support from the upper classes and less discontent in the democratic masses, in order that the states may act as a safe war reserve. On 13th *March*, before the Chamber of Princes, British Imperialism declared that it thanked the Princes for their offer of support in the *September* war crisis and advised that they should combine to form a strong block, that the smaller states who had not resources enough should now pool their resources to have an efficient machine. At the same time the Viceroy asked that Feudalism of the state do shed some of its barbarity by saying: "An absentee ruler like an absentee landlord represents a condition of affairs that has never admitted of justification." The bourgeoisie can admit the dividend-drawing absentee bourgeois but absentee feudal landlordism is not justified! In a sense true; because in the present capitalist economy the landlord has no role in the development of production. And much less the landlord prince merely by his divine inheritance. New Economy, means new princes. Bourgeois economy requires efficient Governors and Viceroys, and not hereditory imbecile opium-eating princes. Modern war requires mechanised men. Princes with their knowledge and interest in parrots and pedigree horses, as Jawaharlal puts it, cannot fit into such a machine. They are, inspite of their training in Oxford, physically and by family tradition and enviornment, too much a relic of the barbarous past. Imperialist bureaucracy is barbarous. But the barbarity of the feudal phase of society is out of order in the modern epoch. Hence Imperialism even demands the over-hauling of the Princes.

When Imperialism is moving in this direction Democracy must mobilise in order not to overhaul but to break the feudal order. The Congress leadership does not stand for breaking the feudal machine. Mahatmaji, relying on the Viceroy's word, is already suspending all civill disobedience struggles, "allowing

time for the Viceroy's pronouncement to work itself out." The various princes have started tinkering with the problem. One state (Cutch) comes out with a fist permitting the killing of the Cheetah and Boar without permit as a concession to peasants, whose fields are devastatsd and cattle ruined! Another, (Indore) confers a municipality with an elected majority but no control on finances! This tinkering has to be stopped. The variety of states may produce a variety of consitutions, but all must at once take to organisation of self-Government by the masses.

There is only one way for letting these thing sdone—the Congress as an organisation must guide. The leadership in the Rajkot struggle was a perfect unity of all class-forces. Dhebar "the Gandhite" and Shukla "the Socialist"—Right and Left,—made an invincible combination and it should be noted with the consent of Sirdar Patel. This spirit must prevail in the Congress here. The offensive must not be allowed to slacken. The crisis must be used to our advantage at a time when Imperialism is vacillating. We will win, if the Mahatma and all sections unite to storm the heavens, without too much "patience." Rajkot has mobilised the masses behind the states struggle ; it brought a united Congress behind the states people. It forced Imperialism to bend. Now the next step is to build up the unity of the organisation on a better footing. Only before a combined attack will Imperialism vacillate and bend. It is bending today with a motive. We have to be more on the offensive and nearer the masses. We can carry the Mahatma and the Right wing with us because "as true satyagrahis" they must react to the gradual change in the enviroment. The Indian mass mind has flown higher and to use the words of the Mahatma "the legal, constitutional and artificial boundaries must be destroyed"—boundaries of both Imperialism and the States, boundaries between our people and states people and the floodgates of progress released.

The suspension of the movement of the states' people would be a disastrous step at this juncture. The states' people's organisations have grown from the narrow coteries of the middle-class politicians into leaders of peoples' movement, precisely because they championed people's demand and fought for them. Today if without winning these demands they retreat, the result is bound to be a wide-spread demoralisation and the undoing of all the gains of the last one year. Petty reforms may be granted but what their nature will be is obvious from the "reforms" announced by Baroda and Patiala states. Between the minimum that the people demand and the maximum that imperialism and the princes are prepared to grant, today there remains a wide gulf and that gulf can be bridged only by an intensification of the struggle and not by its suspension.

Imperialism is ready for a compromise to-day in order to blunt the edge of the popular movement. It wants the states to remain as its war-reserves. It wants to check the influence of the Congress in the states. It is not unlikely therefore that having got "breathing space", having got the movement under control, having satisfied the upper classes in the states with a few crumbs, imperialism would press on to the offensive and would demand the modification of Congress attitude of irreconcilable opposition to every war to which Britain may be a

Party. With the initiative now resting in the hands of imperialism, an initiative which is bound to be used for rehabilitating the shaken citadel of autocracy, it would be difficult for the Congress to effectively resist this demand.

Whatever might have actuated Gandhiji to suspend the popular movement, its result cannot but be the weakening of the national movement as a whole and the strengthening of imperialism. That must be prevented. "No Respite to imperialism and the Princes," "No surrender of the initiatlve" "Press on with the offensive"—must be the nation's slogans.

Book Review

IN ANDAMANS, THE INDIAN BASTILLE

By Bijoy Kumar Sinha

(*Published by Profulla C. Mittra, 24/30 The Mall, Cawnpore. Price Rs 2/8.*)

Inspite of limitations Prison is what we make of it. Accordingly it becomes a place where mighty spirits are crushed and high idealism liquidated, or where idealism and high spirit find new forms of growth and development, where prison itself becomes a school of learning and development of the struggle.

In the story told by Sinha the "terroristis" flung into their living tombs convert the cold barracks into a university which trains young men, for a course which prepares them for future struggles; this they do, not only with abstract theoritical discussions and study, but they also sharpen themselves through struggle itself—struggle for better conditions. In this they have shown that the struggle inside prison, is inalienably, connected with the movement for Independence, outside.

The strongest weapon in British Imperialist armoury in India has for long been the Devil's Island, the Andamans. Many of our bravest and noblest comrades have spent several years of their youth in the dark dungeons of this infernal island. The harrowing tales of their suffering, their high idealism and their grim determination to take their place once again in the freedom fight of our country, have never before been written down in book form with such rare excellence as has now been done by Com. Sinha.

The author, while quite young at college had thrown himself into intense revolutionary work and was one of the principal accused in the Lahore Conspiracy Case of 1929. Sentenced to life imprisonment in that case he was tossed from one prison to another, till at last he was removed to the prisoner's inferno—the Andamans.

"The pleasure of fighting for a cause is immense in the life of a revolutionary but it is transformed into supreme bliss when this privilege is afforded to him in intimate companionship with his comrades-in-arms" (pp. 26). He alone knows, what rare joy is achieved in facing death with trusting and

brave friends. In such a life many fall fighting but their memory remains ever green to inspire their surviving comrades to march ahead." (pp. 37). The first historic hunger-strike of May 1933 had claimed three victims, Mahabir, Mohit and Mohan. But the heroes who were languishing in the Devil's Island wrote with their blood. "Many more will die to-morrow, till our goal is reached. On that day the nation will remember its martyrs. The flag shall be flying high. Our victorious people will rend the air with their thundering cries, "Inquilab Zindabad". (pp. 58-59.)

Sir Henry Craick's "Prisoners' Paradies", and Mr. G. Narayanaswamy Chetty's whining eulogies of the treatment accorded to the political prisoners, have nothing in common with actual conditions obtaining in the Devil's Island. (pp. 127.)

The middle of 1937 saw tremendous changes in the political sphere in India. The Congress had formed ministries in seven out of eleven provinces. The glorious way in which the revolutionaries behind prison-bars in a far off island fought the battle against British Imperialism, whose reactions were reflected in the resignations of the Congress Ministries of U. P. and Bihar, is beautifully portrayed with a wealth of details.

The nation knows how best to honour its heroes. But anxious questions are asked, "Have they abjured terrorism?" "We are glad" telegraphed the Hunder-strikers of Andamans to Mahatma Gandhi, "that you have given us an opportunity to express firm opinion on terrorism. We feel honoured to inform you and through you the nation that those of us who even believed in terrorism, do not do it any more, and are convinced of its futility as a political weapon or creed. We declare that it definitely retards rather than advances the cause of our country". (pp. 200.)

The book concludes with a heart-rending query, "I had the chance to come out (on medical grounds). I trudged the way almost alone. These hundreds of my companions have not yet marched on their 'Road Back.' But will they not?" (pp. 207)

This is a book which every young man and woman should read.

A.S.K.

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